

Message Text

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SUBJECT:ANNUAL HUMAN RIGHTS REPORT

REF: STATE 022819

CHAD IS RULED BY A MILITARY GOVERNMENT. THE ARMED
FORCES SEIZED POWER IN APRIL 1975 CLAIMING THAT THE
PREVIOUS REGIME HAD MISMANAGED THE ECONOMY AND FAILED
TO UNITE THE COUNTRY AND END THE GUERRILLA WAR WHICH
HAS BEEN GOING ON FOR MORE THAN A DECADE. WHILE CERTAIN
REBEL GROUPS HAVE RECONCILED THEIR DIFFERENCES WITH THE
NEW GOVERNMENT, THE MAIN INSURGENCY CONTINUES. FOLLOWING
THE MILITARY COUP, A NUMBER OF POLITICAL PRISONERS WERE
RELEASED. HOWEVER, SINCE THE GOVERNMENT CONSIDERS
ITSELF TO BE IN A STATE OF WAR, IT BELIEVES THAT CERTAIN
POLITICAL RIGHTS, SUCH AS FREE SPEECH, MUST BE RESTRICTED
FOR THE TIME BEING.

UNCLASSIFIED

UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 02 STATE 023909

1. RESPECT FOR THE INTEGRITY OF THE PERSON, INCLUDING
FREEDOM FROM:

A. TORTURE

THERE ARE NO REPORTS THAT THE CURRENT GOVERNMENT HAS

PRACTICED TORTURE.

B. CRUEL, INHUMAN OR DEGRADING TREATMENT OR PUNISHMENT

THE PRESENT PROVISIONAL GOVERNMENT PUT AN END TO FORCED PARTICIPATION IN PHYSICALLY GRUELING TRIBAL INITIATION RITES WHEN IT ASSUMED POWER IN APRIL 1975. THERE ARE NO REPORTS THAT CRUEL, INHUMAN OR DEGRADING TREATMENT OR PUNISHMENT ARE NOW PRACTICED, NOR DO WE HAVE ANY EVIDENCE OF ARBITRARY DEPRIVATION OF LIFE.

C. ARBITRARY ARREST OR IMPRISONMENT

WHEN IT ASSUMED POWER THE PROVISIONAL GOVERNMENT RELEASED A NUMBER OF POLITICAL PRISONERS DETAINED BY THE PREVIOUS GOVERNMENT, BUT PLACED SEVERAL MEMBERS OF THE PREVIOUS REGIME UNDER ARREST. THE CURRENT GOVERNMENT HAS NOT BEEN ABLE TO END THE LONGSTANDING REBELLION IN NORTHERN AND EASTERN CHAD. AS A RESULT, THE GOVERNMENT HAS FELT OBLIGED TO CURTAIL PERSONAL LIBERTIES IN THE PRIMARY REGIONS OF CONFLICT. ARBITRARY ARRESTS OF SUSPECTED GUERRILLAS HAVE OCCURRED.

D. DENIAL OF FAIR PUBLIC TRIAL

UNCLASSIFIED

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PAGE 03 STATE 023909

THE RIGHT TO A FAIR PUBLIC TRIAL IS GENERALLY OBSERVED IN CIVIL AND CRIMINAL CASES NOT INVOLVING POLITICAL ACTS. MOST POLITICAL DETAINEES HAVE BEEN TRIED BY MILITARY COURTS OR BY SPECIAL TRIBUNALS OF THE MINISTRY OF INTERIOR, SOME PUBLIC AND SOME CLOSED. OTHER DETAINEES HAVE BEEN RELEASED WITHOUT TRIAL BECAUSE OF LACK OF EVIDENCE.

THE COUP PLOTTERS WHO ATTEMPTED TO ASSASSINATE THE PRESIDENT IN APRIL 1976 WERE TRIED BEFORE A PUBLIC MILITARY TRIBUNAL. A VARIETY OF SENTENCES, FROM EXCULPATION TO EXECUTION, WERE HANDED DOWN BY THE TRIBUNAL, AFTER A FULL HEARING OF THE AVAILABLE EVIDENCE. IN APRIL 1977 SEVERAL MILITARY OFFICERS WHO ATTEMPTED TO ASSASSINATE THE PRESIDENT WERE CONVICTED OF ARMED INSURRECTION BY THE SUPREME MILITARY COUNCIL IN A CLOSED COURT-MARTIAL AND SUBSEQUENTLY EXECUTED.

E. INVASION OF THE HOME

THIS DOES NOT APPEAR TO BE GENERALLY PRACTICED, ALTHOUGH IT COULD BE AUTHORIZED IN ACCORDANCE WITH SECURITY

MEASURES TO COPE WITH THE GUERRILLA INSURGENCY.

2. GOVERNMENTAL POLICIES RELATING TO THE FULFILLMENT
OF SUCH VITAL NEEDS AS FOOD, SHELTER, HEALTH
CARE AND EDUCATION

AS A VERY POOR COUNTRY, CHAD HAS ACTIVELY SOUGHT
FOREIGN AID TO IMPROVE THE LIVING STANDARDS OF ITS
NATIONALS. THE PROVISIONAL GOVERNMENT HAS PUBLICLY
COMMITTED ITSELF TO IMPROVING THE STANDARDS OF LIVING
OF ITS CITIZENS BY RAISING THE PER CAPITA INCOME,
PROMOTING DEVELOPMENT OF ITS AGRICULTURAL SECTOR AND
IMPROVING SOCIAL SERVICES AND EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS. IT
HAS BEEN RELATIVELY SUCCESSFUL IN ITS EFFORTS TO OBTAIN
UNCLASSIFIED

UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 04 STATE 023909

EXTERNAL AID FOR THESE SOCIAL PROGRAMS. MOST OF THE
CURRENT PROGRAMS CONCENTRATE ON BASIC INSTITUTIONAL
DEVELOPMENT, AND IT IS STILL TOO EARLY TO MEASURE THEIR
IMPACT ON CHAD'S NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT.

3. RESPECT FOR CIVIL AND POLITICAL LIBERTIES INCLUDING

A. FREEDOM OF THOUGHT, SPEECH, PRESS, RELIGION
AND ASSEMBLY

FREEDOMS OF THOUGHT, SPEECH, RELIGION OR ASSEMBLY ARE
NOT SPECIFICALLY GUARANTEED BY LAW. THE GOVERNMENT
MAKES NO ATTEMPT TO FOSTER INTELLECTUAL OR IDEOLOGICAL
CONFORMITY, BUT THE FREEDOMS OF SPEECH AND ASSEMBLY ARE
RESTRICTED FOR SECURITY REASONS. THE PRESS IS STATE-
CONTROLLED IN CHAD. CHADIAN NATIONALS AND FOREIGNERS
IN CHAD ARE FREE TO PRACTICE THE RELIGION OF THEIR
CHOICE. THE PROVISIONAL GOVERNMENT IS REPORTEDLY DRAFTING
A NEW JUDICIAL CODE WHICH IS TO GUARANTEE A MEASURE OF
CIVIL AND POLITICAL RIGHTS TO CHADIAN NATIONALS.
ALTHOUGH A FORMER FRENCH COLONY, TRADITIONAL LAW CONTINUES
TO BE HIGHLY INFLUENTIAL THROUGHOUT CHAD. TRADE UNIONS
ARE PROHIBITED FROM ENGAGING IN ANY POLITICAL ACTIVITY,
AND THE RIGHT TO STRIKE EXISTS ONLY WITHIN THE PRIVATE
SECTOR BECAUSE OF THE NATIONAL EMERGENCY.

B. FREEDOM OF MOVEMENT WITHIN THE COUNTRY,
FOREIGN TRAVEL AND EMIGRATION

SINCE THERE IS AN ACTIVE INSURRECTION IN PARTS OF CHAD,
FREEDOM OF MOVEMENT IS RESTRICTED. EMIGRATION AND
FOREIGN TRAVEL ARE OCCASIONALLY CONTROLLED FOR SECURITY
REASONS DUE TO THE INSURGENCY.
UNCLASSIFIED

UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 05 STATE 023909

C. FREEDOM TO PARTICIPATE IN THE POLITICAL PROCESS

ONLY THOSE INDIVIDUALS DESIGNATED AND APPOINTED BY CHAD'S GOVERNING MILITARY LEADERS ARE FREE TO PARTICIPATE IN THE POLITICAL PROCESS. THE MILITARY HAS POSTPONED PLANS TO RETURN THE COUNTRY TO CIVILIAN RULE UNTIL THE INTERNAL SECURITY SITUATION HAS IMPROVED.

4. GOVERNMENT ATTITUDE AND RECORD REGARDING INTERNATIONAL AND NON-GOVERNMENTAL INVESTIGATION OF ALLEGED VIOLATIONS OF HUMAN RIGHTS

UNDER THE PREVIOUS REGIME, VARIOUS INTERNATIONAL AND RELIGIOUS ORGANIZATIONS PROPOSED THAT CHAD BE INVESTIGATED FOR SERIOUS GOVERNMENT VIOLATIONS OF HUMAN RIGHTS, PARTICULARLY IN THE AREA OF POLITICAL AND RELIGIOUS FREEDOMS. SINCE THE NEW REGIME HAS BEEN IN POWER, THERE HAVE BEEN NO PROPOSALS FOR OUTSIDE INVESTIGATION OF ALLEGED HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS IN CHAD. WE DO NOT KNOW HOW RECEPTIVE THE GOVERNMENT WOULD BE TO SUCH AN INVESTIGATION. VANCE

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